

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of California
Water Service Company (U 60 W), a Corporation,
for an Order Authorizing It to Increase Rates
Charged for Water Service at Each of Its
Operating Districts to Recover Increased
Operating Expenditures at Its General Office.

Application 01-09-062
(Filed September 10, 2001)

And Related Matters.

Application 01-09-063
Application 01-09-064
Application 01-09-065
Application 01-09-066
Application 01-09-067
Application 01-09-068
Application 01-09-069
Application 01-09-070
Application 01-09-071
Application 01-09-072
Application 01-09-073
Application 01-09-074

**ASSIGNED COMMISSIONER'S RULING
CONSOLIDATING APPLICATIONS AND
DETERMINING THE SCOPE, SCHEDULE,
AND NEED FOR HEARING IN THIS PROCEEDING**

This ruling consolidates these related applications and determines the scope, schedule, and need for hearing in accordance with Rules 6(a) and 6.3 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (Rules).¹

Background

On September 21, 2001, the California Water Service Company (Cal Water) filed 13 applications seeking Commission authorization to increase its rates in 15 of its operating divisions. Notices of the filings of the applications appeared on the Commission's calendar on October 18 and 19, 2001.

On November 19, 2001, the Commission's Office of Ratepayer Advocates, Water Branch (ORA) filed its protest of the applications. ORA stated that was conducting the necessary discovery, investigation, and analysis to address issues including whether the estimated revenues, expenses and rate base were just and reasonable and in the public interest.

On November 26, 2001, and February 4, 2002, the Assigned Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) held Prehearing Conferences (PHC). Cal Water appeared with counsel, as did ORA. The parties and the ALJ engaged in an extensive discussion of discovery issues and scheduling.

Consolidation of Applications

These applications reflect common issues of fact. Therefore, the applications will be consolidated pursuant to Rule 55.

Need for Evidentiary Hearings

Issues of material facts remain in dispute between the parties such that scheduling evidentiary hearings will be necessary.

¹ Rules 6(a) and 6.3 require the assigned Commissioner to determine the scope and schedule of a proceeding.

Scope of the Proceeding

The scope of this proceeding shall be to determine whether Cal Water has met its burden of proving that the proposed rate increases are just and reasonable.

Procedural Schedule

At the second PHC, the ALJ adopted the following schedule:

ORA Issue Report	March 29, 2002
Parties Meet and Confer	April 5, 2002
Cal Water Issue Rebuttal Testimony	April 12, 2002
Evidentiary Hearings	April 18, 19, and 22-26, 2002

Principal Hearing Officer

The Assigned Administrative Law Judge, Maribeth A. Bushey, will act as the principal hearing officer in this proceeding.

Ex Parte Communications

This matter is designated as “ratesetting” as defined in Rule 5(c). Therefore, all ex parte communications must comply with Rule 7(c) and 7.1.

IT IS HEREBY RULED that:

1. Evidentiary hearings are needed.
2. The scope of this proceeding is stated above.

3. The schedule for the remainder of this proceeding is as described in the body of this ruling.

4. Administrative Law Judge Maribeth A. Bushey shall be the principal hearing officer in this proceeding.

Dated March 25, 2002, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ HENRY M. DUQUE

Henry M. Duque
Assigned Commissioner

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that I have by mail this day served a true copy of the original attached Assigned Commissioner's Ruling Consolidating Applications and Determining the Scope, Schedule, and Need for Hearing in This Proceeding on all parties of record in this proceeding or their attorneys of record.

Dated March 25, 2002, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ FANNIE SID

Fannie Sid

N O T I C E

Parties should notify the Process Office, Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 2000, San Francisco, CA 94102, of any change of address to insure that they continue to receive documents. You must indicate the proceeding number on the service list on which your name appears.

The Commission's policy is to schedule hearings (meetings, workshops, etc.) in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities. To verify that a particular location is accessible, call: Calendar Clerk (415) 703-1203.

If specialized accommodations for the disabled are needed, e.g., sign language interpreters, those making the arrangements must call the Public Advisor at (415) 703-2074 or TTY# 1-866-836-7825 or (415) 703-5282 at least three working days in advance of the event.